

Applicant: Marcoccia, et al.
Serial No.: 09/879,391

Attorney Ref.: 2065.001A

Remarks

The Applicant requests entry of the above Amendments, and consideration of the application, as amended.

By these Amendments, the Applicant canceled non-elected claims 17-20 and 30-35 and introduced new claims 37-46. New claims 37-46 are drawn to the invention of Group I, discussed below. The Applicant submits that no new matter was introduced and no amendments to the claims were made to overcome any prior art.

Claims 1 -16, 21-29, and 36- 46 are now pending in this application.

Response to Restriction

In paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action mailed March 26, 2003, the Patent Office requested that examination of the present application be restricted, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 121, to one of the following inventions:

- I. Claims 1-16 and 21-29 drawn to a filtration addition system, classified in class 162, subclass 249;
- II. Claims 17-20, drawn to a method for producing uniform filtrate distribution, classified in class 162, subclass 60; and
- III. Claims 30-36 drawn to a method for treating fibrous material in a digester, classified in class 162, subclass 47.

The Applicant notes that claim 36 drawn to a filtrate addition system, and dependent upon claim 22, was mistakenly associated with the claims of Group III. Claim 36 should have been associated with Group I, and is elected herein with the rest of the claims of Group I.

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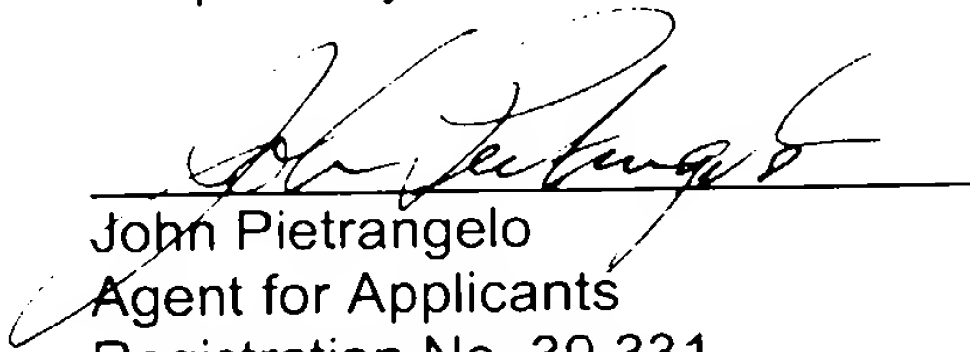
In response to this Restriction Requirement, the Applicant hereby provisionally elects Group I, that is, claims 1 -16, 21-29, 36, and new claims 37-46, with traverse, for prosecution at this time. New claims 37-46 are also drawn to the invention of Group I. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue protection of the non-elected claims via one or more divisional applications at a later time. This provisional election of the claims of Group I is submitted in compliance with 35 U.S.C. §121 and is made without prejudice to the non-elected claims.

The Applicant believes that the application is in allowable form. An early and favorable action on the merits of the application is requested.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, Applicant's undersigned Agent invites the Examiner to telephone him at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

April 24, 2003


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